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Hague Convention

Subject:

U. S. Department of State:

My name is April Rodgers. I have been involved in the International Adoption process for 13 months now. I am currently attempting to adopt a little girl from Tajikistan. This child will be my 6th referral. I began the process with Guatemala as my chosen country. But, then there were problems with the Hague Convention between Guatemala and the United States, not to mention the unstable economic conditions and rioting. Upon recommendation by my agency, I switched countries to Russia. After several referrals there, I was in the process of adopting a little girl, Victoria. I was approximately two weeks away from traveling to pick her up when a Russian couple went to Victoria's adoption agency and adopted her. Of course, she went to that family because they were the same nationality.

After recovering from the heartbreak of that loss, I decided to keep pursuing the adoption process. The reason I want to adopt is to love another human being (orphan) and affect their life since they may not have the same opportunities and freedoms that Americans have been given. I want to save a child from a fate where countrymen would rather they die than be adopted and loved by American parents. I am so fortunate and blessed by God to be born in this country; in fact, we all are fortunate and God-blessed to be living in the United States. The tragic national events of the last few years have illustrated how lucky we are.

In my waiting, a little girl from Tajikistan has become available. Her name is Manizha. I am still in the process of adopting her. The Republic of Tajikistan has become very unstable and there are many issues with that country right now. The adoption process is on hold due to some comments by the countrymen of Tajikistan that would rather the children die than be adopted by any American family. Yet, the United States government is providing over \$20 million in aid to the Republic of Tajikistan (including food aid), and I, as a taxpayer and law-abiding citizen, am outraged by our government's support of such a lawless state as the Republic of Tajikistan.

The Hague Convention just helps convolute the issue. By passing and adhering to the current regulations set forth, even more countries, like Tajikistan, end up winning by complicating the process for all American families who wish to adopt internationally. The children are the ones that end up losing and they pay the highest price - their life!

I personally do not support the Hague Convention in its entirety. The concept is great, however, there appear to be many flaws in that document, specifically parts 96 and 98. Many American citizens will not be able to adopt internationally for financial reasons now. The Hague Convention proposals would increase the already expensive process for the Adoption agencies and the agencies would, therefore, pass those expenses along to the prospective parents. I have made many financial sacrifices in order to begin the process of my own international adoption. If this is passed, I could potentially lose the money I have invested in a child and have to raise more money (i.e. take out another loan) to accommodate the Hague Convention. So, I am asking you as my representation to make my voice heard in Congress and the Department of State. Please do not support this until more reasonable guidelines can be created!

I am begging you to help save the international adoption process as well as thousands of children that need to be rescued!!

Thank you for any assistance that you may provide.

Sincerely,
April M. Rodgers